

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT SANA 0679 ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA AMMAN
CAIRO KHARTOUM FEB 15, 1977

QTE S E C R E T SANA 0679

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE

SUBJ: PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS

1. ROSY ROULEAU, FORMER WIFE OF ERIC ROULEAU, LE MONDE
CORRESPONDENT AND ARABIST, IS BACK IN YEMEN AS
JOURNALIST ON HER OWN. AFTER TEN PREVIOUS TRIPS IN TWICE
AS MANY YEARS, SHE HAS EXCELLENT CONTACTS AND UNUSUAL
PERSPECTIVE. HER ARABIC LETS WHER WORK ONE ON ONE.

2. SHE IS FULL OF STORIES ABOUT SALIM RUBAYYA ALI
WHOM SHE SAW AT LENGTH IN ADEN. HE'S NO A THINKER,
SHE SAYS, BUT A MAN OF ACTION, A MAN WHO HAS DECIDED

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PAGE 02 STATE 045890

FOR HARD PRACTICAL REASONS THAT THE CAUSE OF EXPORTING
REVOLUTION ISN'T WORTH THE COST AT HOME. "WE WERE
STARVING," SALIM TOLD HER. "WE HAD TO TAKE THE
OUTSTRETCHED SAUDI HAND." HE INSISTED THIS WAS A
TACTICAL VICTORY, PERHAPS (SHE FELT) AS MUCH OVER
HARD-LINERS AT HOME AS OVER THE WEALTHY SAUDIS
AND HE TOLD HER FLATELY THAT HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT

LET THE NEW POLICY INFLUENCE THE DOMESTIC ACHIEVEMENTS. BUT THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION WAS NOW MERE TALK, AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF ARMS AND TRAINING, AND NOT REALLY AN ARTICLE OF FAITH ANYMORE.

3. SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO SEE IDEOLOGICAL ABDAL FATTAH ISMAIL BUT HE WAS "IN THE HOSPITAL" AND "VERY SICK. EVERYTHING'S WRONG WITH HIM INCLUDING SOME KIND OF INTERNAL BLEEDING."

COMMENT:

FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS THIS POST HAS PRODUCED A SERIES OF CABLES ENTITLED "PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS," WHICH WAS INTENDED TO LOOK FOR SIGNS OF CHANGE AND VULNERABILITY IN RADICAL PDRY. THE SIGNS ARE THERE BUT THEY ARE NOT UNMIXED. WHEN FOR INSTANCE IVOR LUCAS, UK MIDEAST CHIEF, SAW PDRY FORMIN MUTIH IN NOVEMBER 1976 HE "ASKED HIM IF HE COULD SAY SPECIFICALLY THAT PDRY HAD NO INTENTION OF EXPORTING REVOLUTION. (MUTHI) DID SO, WHILE ADDING THAT OF COURSE CERTAIN REGIMES WERE BOUND TO HAVE OPPOSITION. "(THE QUOTE IF FROM LUCAS'S REPORT.) SOE ONE MUST SHOOSE. WE THINK THE BALANCE HAS SWUNG DECISIVELY ON THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION ALTHOUGH LINK TO TERRORISM REMAINS STRONG. MOREOVER, THERE IS A POTENTIAL FOR MUCH FURTHER CHANGE. LONG CABLE DETAILING THIS AND SUGGESTING A CHANGE OF US POLICY TO SPEED AND TO EXPLOIT THESE SHIFTS WERE SENT THIS WEEK. THE CONCLUSION: THE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES NOW JUSTIFY RENEWED RELATIONS WITH PDRY. WE CAN'T BE SURE RELATIONS WLLL PRODUCE THE RESULTS WE WANT,
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PAGE 03 STATE 045890

BUT IT'S WORTH TRYING. SCOTES UNQTE VANCE

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